



BSA Statement on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) and Sexual Harassment

Architecture, along with the entire building-industry, has been plagued by longstanding patterns of racial and gender discrimination and inequity. The domination of one culture in leadership and power positions has resulted in an imbalanced and unjust system. While we believe that the overwhelming majority of architects and firms care deeply about rectifying these imbalances and inequities of the current culture, change is painfully slow. As an organization comprising nearly 4,000 members, the Boston Society of Architects/AIA (BSA/AIA) acknowledges our responsibility for how this culture has affected and continues to affect everyone in and around the profession. We, the BSA, have a duty to help make our profession more equitable, diverse and inclusive.

We bear an obligation to ensure that every workplace and design school is safe from sexual harassment and similar abuses – an issue that is both unique and interconnected with equity, diversity and inclusion. Recent events reveal disturbing and deplorable conditions that some have faced. We applaud the courage of those who come forward to challenge abuses and the lack of diversity within their workplaces and schools, because doing so brings personal risks calculable only by those who take them. We support the recent [statement](#) of AIA President Carl Elefante FAIA that “sexual harassment – in any form and in any workplace – should not be tolerated and must be addressed swiftly and forcefully” and the recent AIA [statement](#), “Where we stand: sexual harassment & the architectural profession.”

On both these issues there is much work to be done. To that end, we are engaging our members and staff, with the help of external experts, to help us identify and take actions that will change this culture. We will focus on specific actions that improve individual opportunities, the culture of firms and schools, and the operations and culture of the BSA itself. The BSA Board has authorized the creation of a task force to oversee two charges:

1. Review the [AIA Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Report](#), identify any proposed enhancements to the report, review diversity within the BSA relative to other cities, and recommend:
 - a. Actionable steps the BSA can take to increase equity, diversity and inclusion in the profession and the BSA. The steps should include tools for individual as well as firm development.
 - b. Appropriate written BSA policies and position statements including visionary equity goals that will support these actions.
2. Develop a BSA action plan around the following issues of sexual misconduct, harassment and inappropriate professional conduct:
 - a. Support for those who are or may be victims of workplace abuse or misconduct.
 - b. Support for firms and schools in creating positive environments for all employees, consultants, clients and the public.
 - c. Appropriate procedures relating to allegations of BSA member misconduct or abuse.
 - d. Examination of the BSA’s internal employee procedures around misconduct, to ensure the staff is provided a safe environment free from harassment.

We will be fully transparent in this initiative, and will provide regular communications to members highlighting specific actions we are taking to advance this work. If you are interested in participating or have any recommendations, please feel free to let us know at ewhite@architects.org or 617-391-4000.